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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/689,121	10/20/2003	William Kopaciewicz	MCA-617	2908

42754 7590 06/30/2006

NIELDS & LEMACK
176 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 7
WESTBORO, MA 01581

EXAMINER

HANDY, DWAYNE K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1743

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/689,121	Applicant(s) KOPACIEWICZ ET AL.	
	Examiner Dwayne K. Handy	Art Unit 1743	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 April 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 19-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 19-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 1-3, 6, 19 and 20 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12 of U.S. Patent No.

6,830,717. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other. This rejection was originally applied to claims 1-3 and 6 in the previous Office Action (mailed 1/25/06). It now also applies to new claims 19 and 20.

3. Claims 1-3, 19 and 20 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-18 of U.S. Patent No.

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6,635,201 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,830,717. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other. Claims 1-18 of the patent recite a method of casting a composite structure comprised of the steps of forming a polymer solution, adding porous particles to the solution, introducing the solution into a housing, and then causing the polymer to form a porous polymer matrix. Claims 1-18 of ('201) do not specifically recite two openings or exposing the casting solution to a quenching bath at both ends of the opening. Claims 1-12 of ('717) also recite a method of casting a composite structure. The method includes immersing either a pipette of multiwell array in a quenching bath. It would have been obvious to combine the method steps recited in '717 with the method recited in '201. One would use a multiwell array as the housing in order to form a multiwell filter plate. One would use an immersion step to treat all the wells at the same time in a batch manner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1-4, 6, and 19-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kopaciewicz et al. (6,048,457). This rejection was originally applied to

claims 1-4 and 6 in the previous Office Action (mailed 1/25/06). It now also applies to new claims 19-22. Please see Response to Arguments below.

Inventorship

6. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.

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2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

8. Claims 5 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kopaciewicz et al. (6,048,457) in view of Wheeler et al. (US 2003/0190260).

Kopaciewicz teaches every element of claims 5 and except for the use of a quenching gas. Kopaciewicz teaches the use of a liquid quencher. Kopaciewicz does teach air casting of the polymeric matrix though which requires an evaporation of the solvent used as the polymer binder (column 5, lines 20-58). Wheeler et al. (US 2003/0190260) teaches a combinatorial reactor system. The reactor system uses a quenching gas to stop reactions that are occurring in the reactors (page 9, paragraph 86). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the quenching gas step of Wheeler with the method of Kopaciewicz. One would use a gas to quench the reaction to stop the reaction and help evaporate any solvent used in the casting.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments filed 4/10/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant has amended claims 1 and added new claims 19-23. Claim 1 now includes the limitation of the housing having two openings in fluid communication with each other. Claim 19 now includes the limitation of the quenching bath entering the housing at both openings. Applicant has then argued that these new features

distinguish the instant claims over the current rejections. The Examiner respectfully disagrees.

10. In response to the amending of claim 1, the Examiner did remove the Double Patenting rejection involving **only** the 6,635,201 Patent. This rejection has now been rewritten with an additional reference to include a housing with openings in fluid communication and an immersion step.

As for the Double Patenting rejection under U.S. Pat. 6,830,717, this rejection remains in effect. The Examiner directs Applicant to claims 1 and 7 which contain immersion steps and also claims 3, 4, 9 and 10 which recite housings – multiwell array, pipette - having two openings in fluid communication.

11. Applicant has also argued that Kopaciewicz et al. (6,048,457) does not teach the limitations of claims 1 and 19 and cites Example 9 of the reference. The Examiner directs Applicant to column 7, lines 34-53 of '457 where the use of an immersion bath (I. 47) is disclosed. Immersing the housing in the quenching bath would cause the bath to enter both ends of a well or pipette housing.

Conclusion

12. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dwayne K. Handy whose telephone number is (571)-272-1259. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on (571)-272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

DKH
June 23, 2006


Jill Warden
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700